UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

OCT 25 1954

READING ROOM

560

Bulletin

OF THE

DETROIT

INSTITUTE

OF ARTS

THE COUNTESS DE THÉLUSSON By JEAN-ANTOINE HOUDON French (1741-1828) Gift of Leslie H. Green, 1953 (See p. 76)

VOLUME XXXIII • NUMBERS 3 and 4 1953-54

THE

Archives of American Art

JT IS WITH PRIDE that the Detroit Institute of Arts announces the establishment of the ARCHIVES OF AMERICAN ART for the purpose of collecting in one central place original records of American painters, sculptors and craftsmen. These records may be original letters or notebooks; unpublished notes of historians or correspondence of art dealers; documents of an ephemeral nature and difficult of access; reproductions, by microfilming or other processes, of such records preserved permanently in other collections; in other words, whatever may throw light upon the arts in America. No restrictions of period or place are intended, since the aim of the Archives is to assemble everything that will ultimately make the collection an effective center for research in American art.

The Archives will not compete with, or replace, existing collections or libraries, but rather will enlarge their usefulness. No organization in this country attempts to bring together such documents on a national scale. We intend to create a complete working collection of documentary material for the convenience of the special student and for the stimulation of serious study of our artistic history. To individual libraries, it will provide a duplicate record in case of loss or destruction. To the students it will offer an appreciable saving of time and money.

For its pilot project we have selected Philadephia. We were fortunate enough to secure the help of Professor Charles Coleman Sellers, author of The Artist of The Revolution: the Early Life of Charles Willson Peale: and Portraits and Miniatures By Charles Willson Peale, to launch the project. Miss Frances Lichten, author of Folk Art of Rural Pennsylvania, is now carrying on the work of arranging material and supervising the microfilming of documents in Philadelphia institutions.

The Archives are supported by private contributions under the management of the Detroit Institute of Arts and are administered by the Institute's Reference Library. It is doubtless one of the most ambitious projects ever undertaken by an American museum.

E. P. RICHARDSON



INTRODUCTION

The past twelve months have been months of great activity at the Detroit Institute of Arts. New projects, such as the creation of the Archives of American Art and the Detroit News-Art Institute center of Puppets & Puppetry; the film productions made possible by a grant from Burroughs Corporation; the Kresge Foundation grant for equipment in our educational workshops; the new subscription lecture series – all these have taken shape in the last few months. New study rooms have been built, increasing the scope of the services which the Department of Education offers to the citizens of Detroit. The development of the museum's collections is equally impressive. In less than a year more than five hundred objects, most of them of great historical and artistic import, have been added in every department of the museum. This issue of the BULLETIN is devoted to some of these recent accessions. Many of these deserve to be, and will be, more fully studied elsewhere than is possible here. But it is hoped that by leafing through this brief "Picture Book" our readers will realize how varied and how pleasant and rich our new acquisitions have been in the past year. The choice among all the works of art which have come to us has been difficult. Those illustrated in the pages that follow reflect, in as varied a manner as possible, the high standards of taste of our friends. To some at least of these objects may be applied some superlative. The pieces of Irish gold form the most important group of prehistoric Irish gold this side of the Atlantic. The triptych by the Master of St. Cecilia is the greatest work by this artist outside Italy. The bronze bust of Madame de Thélusson is a supreme example of Houdon's portraiture in a difficult technique. Kokoschka's Cat is perhaps the most striking depiction of an animal in contemporary painting. But even the most modest of the objects shown here has with these splendid and impressive works some common denominator of grace or beauty. The Lambeth candlestick, the miniature teapot by the 18th century Philadelphia silversmith, Edmund Milne, the examples of French Canadian sculpture, each of these adds to our collection a note of gaiety or intimacy.

EIGHT EXAMPLES OF PREHISTORIC IRISH GOLD

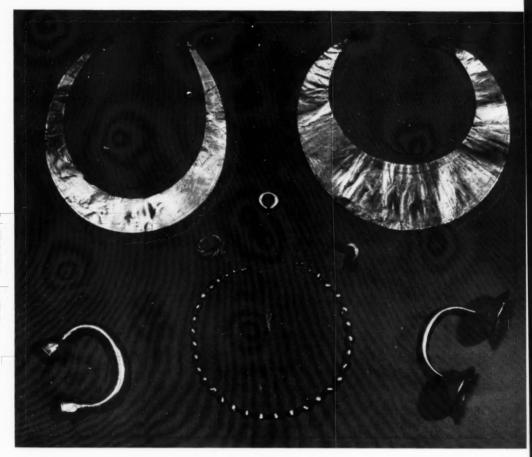
A group of eight aesthetically enjoyable and historically important gold objects of great rarity in this country from the mysterious past of ancient Ireland has been acquired by the Detroit Institute of Arts for the Gallery of Prehistoric Art.

Shown here, upper left and right, are two lunulae or crescent-shaped neckornaments: the wider one, measuring two and three-quarters inches at its widest part and eight and three-quarters inches from side to side, found near Middleton, County Cork, 1867, is a gift of the William H. Murphy Fund, 1953 (Acc. No. 53.268); the narrow lunula, measuring one and three-eighths inches at its widest part and seven and a half inches from side to side, was found near Ardara, County Donegal, 1842, and published in Archaeologia, volume XXX (1843-44), plate XII; for many years it was in the collection of Lord Londesborough (sold 1884); it was purchased with City Appropriation, 1953 (Acc. No. 53.273). Funds from the same source permitted the purchase of two other pieces: two penannular rings, sometimes called bracelets or fibulae (dress clasps), but possibly, being found in so many forms and weights, a medium of exchange or a form of wealth, illustrated lower left and right; the heavier one with bellshaped terminals (Acc. No. 53.274), having a maximum diameter of three and three eighths inches, and the lighter form with its slender curved shank and great expanding conical trumpet-like ends, measuring from tip to tip five and five-sixteenths inches (Acc. No. 53.275), were both found at Athlone, County Westmeath, and were formerly in the Thomas Bateman Collection (sold 1893). These very characteristic Irish gold objects, dating from the Bronze Age, have been found in great quantities in Ireland and nearby lands. So far, however, the finds have not determined to the satisfaction of all archaeologists and art historians the original use of these distinctive objects.

Other pieces lately acquired are also illustrated. The delicate twisted-ribbon torque or necklace, shown in the lower center, was discovered in County Clare, the very county in which was found in 1854 a fabulous treasure of not less than one hundred and fifty prehistoric gold objects weighing more than one hundred and seventy-four ounces troy weight, now scattered, some objects being preserved in public museums and private collections and others having been melted down for the gold, the all-too-common fate of such metalwork found by chance. This is as alluring in its brilliance today as when it was made, between two and four thousand years ago. This torque, measuring five and a half inches in diameter, was formerly in the collections of W. Talbot Ready and Lord Kensington. It was presented to the Detroit Institute of Arts by Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence A. Fleischman in commemoration of the birth of their daughter,

Martha Jane, in October, 1953 (Acc. No. 54.35).

Three small pieces, each typical of ancient Irish goldsmithing, shown in the center of the illustration, have been acquired through the William H. Murphy Fund: an earring of twisted fluted shape, diameter one and one quarter

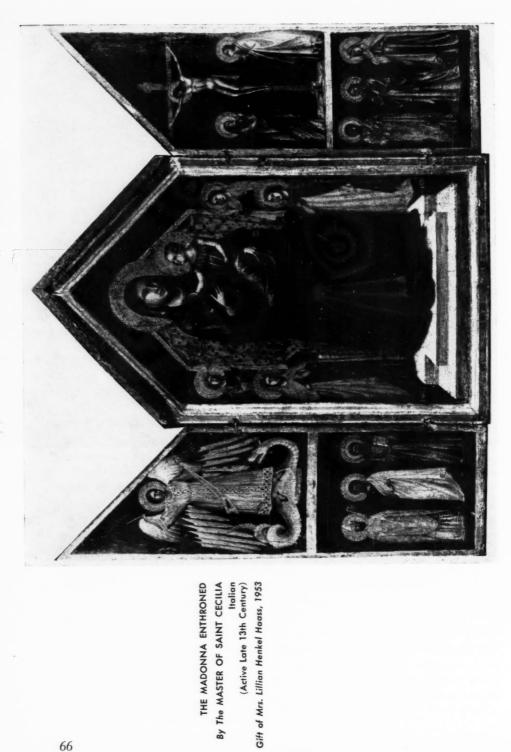


GOLD ORNAMENTS. Irish, Bronze and Iron Age, 2000-200 B.C. City Appropriation; Gift of the William H. Murphy Fund; and G ft of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence A. Fleischman, 1953 and 1954

inches (Acc. No. 54.241), a small penannular ring with striations on the curved shank and plain flat disc terminals, looking like a cuff-link form of the larger bracelets or clasps, having a maximum dimension of one and one-eighth inches, found in County Cork (Acc. No. 54.240), and a penannular ring of iron sheathed with gold, perhaps a hair ornament (for the ancient Egyptians wore such broken rings in their hair) but traditionally termed "ring money" and so perhaps a smaller form of the larger open rings or bracelets (Acc. No. 54.242).

These and many related gold objects, made by the early peoples of Ireland during the Bronze Age, which began about 2000-1800 B.C., and the early Iron Age, down to about 200 B.C., have been found in large numbers in Ireland and to a lesser extent in Scotland, England and Wales, and upon the European Continent. This collection of eight pieces now in Detroit is the most important group of prehistoric Irish gold objects in this country.

FRANCIS W. ROBINSON



Italian (Active Late 13th Century) THE MADONNA ENTHRONED By The MASTER OF SAINT CECILIA

THE MADONNA ENTHRONED A Triptych by THE MASTER OF SAINT CECILIA

The thirteenth century triptych which Mrs. Haass has given us from her private collection is, in my belief, the best representative in America of one of the greatest moments in art. The Master of Saint Cecilia (so-called from an altarpiece of the legend of that saint, preserved now in the Uffizi Gallery) was an assistant of Giotto in the execution of the huge fresco cycle of the Life of St. Francis in the upper church at Assisi, about 1296-98 A.D. At least three (some authorities believe more) of the scenes which hang like great tapestries of blue and ivory, brown and yellow on the high walls of the upper church—as luminous as clouds, and, in their worn, time-altered state, almost as elusive and imponderable—are generally credited to this nameless, gifted assistant.

There are good pictures on this continent from the later period of Giotto's workshop, in Florence, and of his many Florentine pupils. The Haass picture is probably twenty-five years earlier than any of these and represents not only an older generation but a phase of Giottesque painting so different that some modern critics would defy the tradition of seven centuries and deny that the

St. Francis cycle was Giotto's at all.

The originality of the Detroit triptych lies in its extraordinary color. The Madonna and Child form a mass of dark blue-green and amethyst, entirely surrounded by a fiery red, burning against a black background. These colors—dark blue and green, blood red, black, with softer lights of buff or ivory—are repeated in the scenes of the wings, where the flame reds against the black are most dramatic. To the grandeur of Giotto's syle, this unknown painter added a striking and highly personal element of color.

Dr. Richard Offner, who associates the Master of Saint Cecilia with the miniaturist tradition in Florentine painting, finds the Haass triptych too monumental for his conception of the artist and attributes it to another artist, known only in this work; but he is alone in this opinion. The Haass triptych seems to me not only the greatest work of this artist outside Italy but a picture in which one feels the brusque touch of that austere, elevated, heroic spirit that is one's

most lasting memory of Assisi.

E. P. RICHARDSON

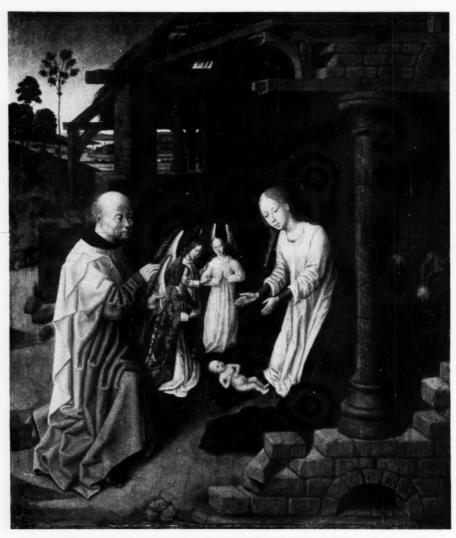
Cat. No. 1135. Center. The Madonna and Child, Enthroned, with Saints Lucy, Margaret, Mary Magdalen and Catherine, H. 29½ inches, W. 1736 inches;

Left Panel: (cradled): St. Michael and the Dragon (above), Saints Nicholas of Tolentino, Peter and Francis (below); H. 28¼ inches, W. 9 inches;

Right Panel: (cradled): The Crucifixion with St. Mary and St. John (above); Two Male Saints and a Female Saint (below), H. 281/8 inches; W. 81/8 inches.

Collections: L. Grassi, Florence; Achillito Chiesa, Milan; Mrs. Lillian Henkel Haass. References: Osvald Sirén, Burlington Magazine, XLV (1924), p. 272 and pl. IIc; Richard Offner, A Corpus of Florentine Painting, Section III, Volume I, 1931, pp. 51-52, pl. XI: W. R. Valentiner, Loan Exhibition of Italian Paintings from the XIV to the XVI Century, Detroit, 1933, No. 2; also Pantheon, XII (1933), p. 238 and illus. 6. 239.

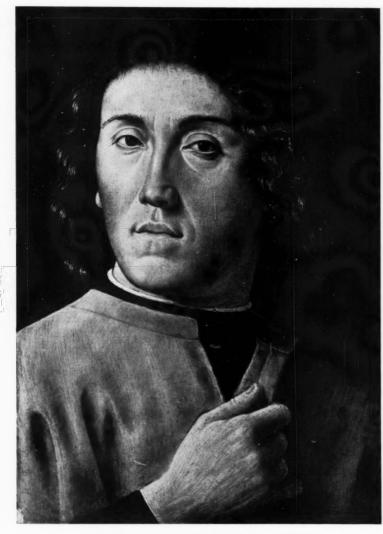
Gift of Mrs. Lillian Henkel Haass, 1953. Acc. No. 53.386.



THE ADORATION OF THE CHRIST CHILD by the MASTER OF THE LEGEND OF ST. CATHERINE Flemish (Active 1470-1500). Cat. No. 1129

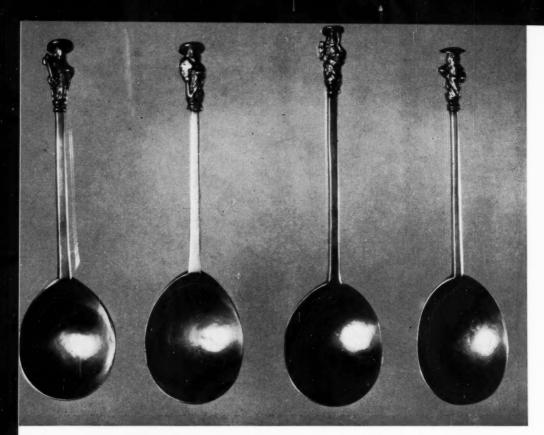
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. A. D. Wilkinson, 1954

This small panel, 14 by 12 inches, is the work of an unknown Flemish painter of the second half of the fifteenth century, who was evidently influenced by more famous, more forceful masters, such as Rogier van der Weyden and Memling. Yet, this *Adoration of the Christ Child*, a delicate and complex harmony of muted reds, blues and greens is unmistakably the work of an excellent artist, who worked in an age when originality was considered less of a prerequisite to great talent than it is today. And what beautiful and sensitive hands all the actors of the great drama have!



PORTRAIT OF A MAN By DOMENICO GHIRLANDAJO Italian (1449-1498). Cat. No. 1134 Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Alfred J. Fisher, 1953

Portraiture was still a new art when this portrait of a young Florentine - a fellow artist perhaps - was painted. Its technique recalls that of another portrait by Ghirlandajo, a fresco fragment in the Institute's collections: these are the brush strokes of a fresco painter, energetic, nervous and bold. This portrait (13 by 9 inches) is indeed closely related to the heads in Ghirlandajo's frescoes of the Life of Saint Francis in Florence, executed about 1483-1485.



FOUR "APOSTLE" SPOONS. English, 1657-1664. Acc. Nos. 54.31-34 Gift of Mrs. Henry P. Williams, 1954



TAZZA, by William Andrews, English (London, 1701-1702). Diameter 7 in. Acc. No. 53.434.

Gift of Robert H. Tannahill in memory of Mrs. William Clay, 1953



DOUBLE-HANDLED CUP by JOHN DOWNES English (London, 1698-1699) Diameter 4 in. Acc. No. 53.431 Gift of Robert H. Tannahill in memory of Mrs. William Clay, 1953

The Institute's collection of English silver has become impressive both in number and in quality, in large part due to Mr. Robert H. Tannahill. Several objects of great rarity have been added recently to this group. Shown here are a *Tazza*, or footed plate, with delicate gadrooning, and a two-handled cup with excellent markings. The small footed cup, illustrated on this page, is a scarce example and was apparently used as a sweetmeat dish. It is remarkable for its unusual decoration, a double garland of boldly outlined leaves and a multi-sided star. The Apostle spoons, presented by Mrs. Henry P. Williams, are of a type hitherto unrepresented in the museum; one represents Saint Peter with his key, while another (made in Exeter in 1662), shows Saint Jude with his cross-staff.

SWEETMEAT CUP
English (Maker: A. S.
London, 1638-1639)
Diameter 3% in. Acc. No. 53.430
Gift of Robert H. Tannahili
in memory of
Mrs. William Clay, 1953





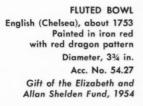
Left: PUNCH BOWL. English (Bristol), about 1755-1760. Decorated in blue, yellow and purple with Chinoiseries. The interior is inscribed: "Success to the British Arms," and decorated in the bianco sopra bianco manner. Diameter, 10 in. Acc. No. 54.49 Gift of the Elizabeth and Allan Shelden Fund, 1954

Right: CANDLESTICK. English (Lambeth), about 1650. Plain white ware over pinkish clay. Height, 9 in. Acc. No. 54.113
Gift of the Mary Martin Semmes Fund, 1954

A large exhibition of English ceramics took place at the Institute last winter. From a group of pieces lent by dealers the Institute has been able to acquire, through the generosity of several donors, an impressive series of objects. Illustrated on this page are two pieces of pottery, both of great rarity and artistic quality. On the opposite page are shown examples of English porcelain. The two Derby figures are well-known models, used by other European factories as well, while the Chelsea fluted bowl and the two Bristol wine cups are proof of the Oriental influences which played so great a part in eighteenth century decorative arts.



THE PEDLAR AND HIS MATE English (Derby), about 1760 Height, 7½ in. Acc. Nos. 54.42-43 Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Kanzler, 1954





PAIR OF WINE CUPS English ("Lowdin's Bristol") about 1752 Acc. Nos. 54.29-30 Gift of Mrs. Lillian Henkel Haass



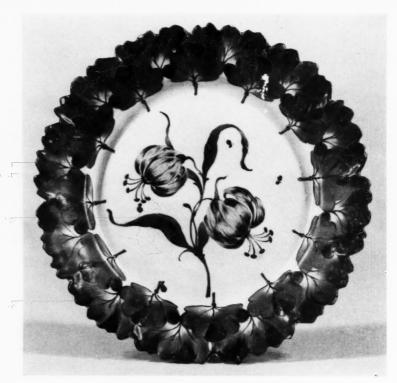


PLATE French (Sceaux), about 1760-1770
Painted in enamel colors, mostly in green and yellow. Diameter, 8 in. Acc. No. 53.324
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Norman D. Jordan, 1953

Very few museums in this country have representative collections of French ceramics, which are unsurpassed for their mellowness and decorative quality. A number of pieces have been added recently to the Institute's small group of these wares. The plate shown above was made at the faience factory of Sceaux near Paris which, as has been said, "epitomizes the achievement of the French faience industry in the second half of the eighteenth century." The cup and saucer, made of plain white porcelain, are characteristic examples of Saint-Cloud porcelain, some twenty years before the Sèvres porcelain factory was established.

CUP AND SAUCER
French (Saint-Cloud)
about 1730
Decorated in relief with
prunus flowers, birds
and butterflies
Acc. No. 53.325
Gift of Mr. and Mrs.
Norman D. Jordan, 1953





MINIATURE SILVER TEAPOT by EDMUND MILNE, American (Philadelphia), active in the second half of the 18th Century Height, 5 in. Acc. No. 53.385 Gift of the Gibbs-Williams Fund, 1953

The most important addition to the collection of American silver is this small teapot by Edmund Milne, a Philadelphia silversmith who worked for General Washington. The arms, beautifully engraved, are those of the Washburton family.

MADAME DE THÉLUSSON by JEAN ANTOINE HOUDON

Houdon was the greatest sculptor of the late eighteenth century in France. He lived at a great time and had as his subjects extraordinary personalities, Voltaire, Rousseau, Franklin, Washington, the French Royal family, all the European princes who visited Paris. But, to us, the Countess Jean Isaac de Thélusson (1770-1845) is just a woman, any woman of the period, depicted

with great ease and at the same time with infinite subtle pains.

This bronze bust, the generous gift of Mr. Leslie H. Green, is signed and dated 1791. One of the very few original works in that medium by Houdon in this country, it remained in the sitter's family until 1923 or 1924, when it was purchased by Mr. Vanderbilt. (It was until recently in the collection of Mme. Jacques Balsan.) It was exhibited at the Salon in 1793, the same year that Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette were executed on the guillotine. Madame de Thélusson is thus one of the last glimpses we have, through Houdon's eyes, of the urbane, witty, polished old world of French society that was shattered by the Revolution.

THE COUNTESS DE THÉLUSSON by JEAN ANTOINE HOUDON, French (1741-1828) Height, 33 inches (including base). Acc. No. 53.276 Gift of Leslie H. Green, 1953





TWO-HANDLED CUP by JEAN AMIOT, Canadian (1750-1821), active in Quebec Diameter 4% in. Acc. No. 53.14

Gift of Robert H. Tannahill, 1953



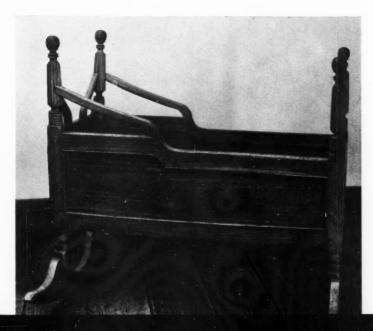
PAIR OF CRUETS AND STAND by LAURENT AMIOT, Canadian (1764-1839), active in Quebec Height of cruets, 51/4 in. Tray: length 7-9/16 in.; width, 5-7/16 in. Acc. No. 53.320 A-C Gift of Robert H Tannahill, 1953

The two galleries devoted to the Arts of French Canada, the only ones of their kind in the United States, have recently received welcome additions. The two-handled cup (probably a *coupe* \grave{a} *quêter*) and the cruets and stands were executed by two well-known Quebec silversmiths. The latter probably came from the parish church of Saint-Antoine de Tilley, P. Q. The other examples of

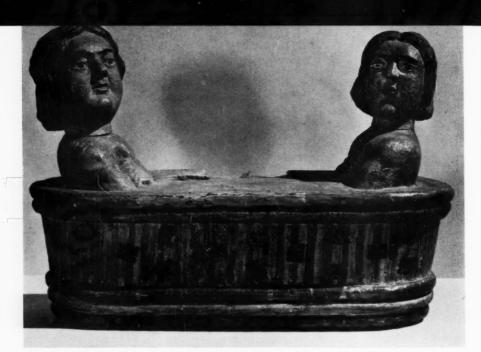


CHANDELIER. Painted and gilded wood. Canadian, late 18th Century Height 34 in. Acc. No. 53.422 Gift of the Elizabeth and Allan Shelden Fund, 1953

French-Canadian craftsmanship shown here are part of a large group of furniture and sculpture gathered in the Province of Quebec. The "Babies in the Tub" (of whom there should be three) comes from the town of Saint-Nicolas (P. Q.) and illustrates a famous episode of the Saint's life. The papier mâché Virgin, from St. Elizabeth, is closely similar to a statue executed about 1850 by the Grey Nuns of Montreal.



CRADLE
Canadian
early 19th Century
Length 34 in.
Acc. No. 53.421
Gift of the Elizabeth
and Allan Shelden Fund,
1953



"TWO CHILDREN IN A TUB," from a group of Saint Nicholas and the Children. Polychromed wood Canadian (Province of Quebec), 2nd half of the 18th Century. Length 201/4 in. Acc. No. 53.418

Gift of the Elizabeth and Allan Shelden Fund, 1953

THE VIRGIN OF THE
IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
Papier mâché,
painted and moulded
Canadian, middle of the
19th Century.
Height 54 in. Acc. No. 53.419
Gift of the Elizabeth and
Allan Shelden Fund

PASCHAL LILY
Carved and painted wood
Canadian (Province of
Quebec), 19th Century
Height 67 in. Acc. No. 53.329
Gift of Mrs. Lillian
Henkel Haass

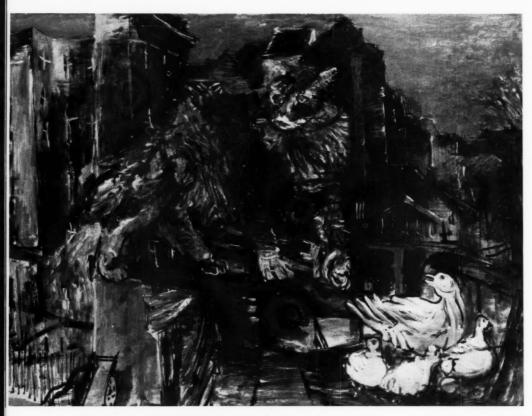






PORTRAIT OF JUDITH GAUTIER by JOHN SINGER SARGENT American (1856-1925) Height, 39 in.; width, 24½ in. Cat. No. 1126 Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Kanzler, 1954

Judith Gautier was one of the colorful personalities of the late 19th century in Paris. The adopted daughter of Théophile Gautier, she was close to Richard Wagner (correspondence between them has been preserved) and Pierre Louys, who wrote his *Aphrodite* at her home, and married Catulle Mendés, the Parnassian poet. Sargent was a great friend of hers.



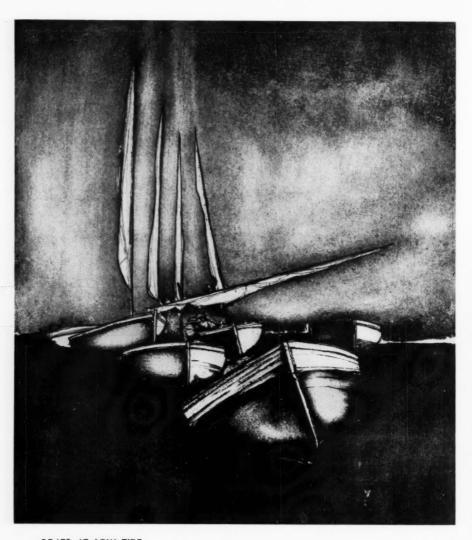
THE CAT by OSCAR KOKOSCHKA, Austrian Contemporary Height, 35% in.; width, 49½ in. Cat. No. 1131 Gift of Robert H. Tannahill, 1953

Oscar Kokoschka, one of the foremost artists of our day, was already represented in the Institute by two impressive works, *The Elbe near Dresden* (1920) and the tragic *Jerusalem* painted in 1929. *The Cat* (1926), in spite of its subject, is equally monumental, with a serenity which the other paintings do not have.



BUILDINGS ABSTRACTION, 1931 by CHARLES DEMUTH, American (1883-1935) Height, 27% in.; width, 23% in. Cat. No. 1124 Gift of the Founders Society General Membership Fund, 1954

Charles Demuth was primarily a water colorist. In the exhibition held in New York after his death only sixteen oils were shown as against more than one hundred water colors. *Buildings Abstraction*, executed on a large scale in the former medium, has the freshness, coherence and spontaneity of his other works.



BOATS AT LOW TIDE
by RENZO VESPIGNANI
Italian Contemporary
Wash Drawing
Height 23 in.; width, 18 in.
Acc. No. 53.473
Gift of John S. Newberry, Jr.,
1953

The "Friends of Modern Art" of the Institute has accomplished much in the few years of its existence. Thanks to its interest the museum has been able to acquire sculptures and paintings by such contemporary artists as Ben Shahn, Giacometti. Among its most recent gifts is the

large painting reproduced below, by a member of the Italian school, which numbers some of the most active and progressive artists in today's Europe. The *Boats at low tide* by Vespignani is one of the recent gifts of Mr. John S. Newberry, Jr., the chairman of the group.

by LEONARDO CREMONINI
Italian Contemporary
Height, 41 in.; width 5434 in.
Cat. No. 1138
Gift of the Friends of
Modern Art, 1954





PASSOVER CEREMONIAL CUP by EARL KRENTZIN American Contemporary Height 4½ in. Acct. No. 54.184 Gift of the Founders Society, 1954

The Michigan Artist-Craftsmen Exhibition is one of the outstanding annual events in the life of the Institute. This year 117 artist-craftsmen, representing work from 31 Michigan communities, exhibited 246 pieces. Ten prizes were offered. The coveted Founders Society Purchase Prize was awarded to Earl Krentzin of Oak Park for the silver Passover ceremonial cup reproduced here.

DETROIT MUSEUM OF ART FOUNDERS SOCIETY

NEW BENEFACTORS

The Detroit News

Mrs. A. D. Wilkinson

NEW FELLOWS AND GOVERNING MEMBERS FROM MARCH 31, 1953 TO JUNE 15, 1954

NEW FELLOWS

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Mr. James S. Whitcomb

Mr. A. D. Wilkinson

NEW GOVERNING MEMBERS

Brooke, Smith, French & Dorrance, Inc.

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Fleischman

Mr. and Mrs. W. B. Ford II Mrs. Edith Gregor Halpert Mrs. Phelps Newberry Mr. Anthony Maiullo Mr. John Miller Mrs. Gilmore G. Scranton Mr. Raymond C. Smith

Mr. John W. Southworth

The Italian Government

Mr. Renville Wheat

Mrs. James S. Whitcomb

Mrs. Henry P. Williams

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from March 31, 1953 to June 15, 1954

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Mrs. Sidney Jay Allen Mr. John Allshouse

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Mrs. Owen R. Baker, Sr. Mr. Peter C. Ball

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